

# BOOLAVOGUE

Lyrics, Patrick Joseph McCall, 1898  
Tune: YOUGHAL HARBOUR, Old Irish Air

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"*Boolavogue*", is an Irish ballad written to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Irish Rebellion. The rebellion was organized by a group calling itself the United Irishmen, and was supposed to involve uprisings all across the country. However, due to communication and organizational problems, the outbreaks were sporadic and quickly put down by the British forces. The song takes its name from that of a town in County Wexford in the south-east of Ireland, which was one of the few areas where the rebellion had any military success. The song has become an anthem for County Wexford. It was first published under the name "*Father Murphy of County Wexford*".

The song tells the story of Father John Murphy who, although a priest and opposed to violence, led an untrained, poorly armed group of rebels to a series of victories that shook the British establishment, starting with the battle of Boolavogue. Father Murphy was not a member of the United Irishmen, but got involved after British militia burned down his church and surrounding cottages to intimidate the local people. Subsequent verses document how Father Murphy and other rebel leaders had further victories in Wexford and surrounding counties. These victories were short-lived, however, and the Wexford insurgents were defeated at the Battle of Vinegar Hill, and Father Murphy and the other rebel leaders were captured and hanged.

McCall wrote other popular Irish ballads, including "*Kelly the Boy from Killanne*", "*Follow Me To Carlow*", and "*Boys of Wexford*".

In music and friendship,

~Tull

